

Conserving Natural Resources in the Chesapeake Bay

June 2008

West Virginia Success Story

Arthur has always been one to step up to the plate and lead by example in this county. Working with him is always a pleasure and interesting experience. His desire to protect the land that he has the privilege to farm has always been a priority.

Ed Kesecker

NRCS District Conservationist, Retired

He also lives good environmental practices on his farm, demonstrating commitment through his actions as well as his words. For example, he enrolled his farm in the USDA-CREP program, with the result that the stream that runs through his farm is now mostly off limits to cattle, and planted a forested riparian buffer in that area. This spring, he offered Cacapon Institute use of his CREP site in an experiment testing the use of a new electric fence configuration to reduce deer browse in that area. Deer browse has been identified by Cacapon Institute as the number one threat to successfully growing trees in riparian plantings in WV's Potomac Headwaters region. Mr. Halterman is very engaged in this project and hopeful that the results will help the next generation of riparian plantings prove more successful.

Neil Gillies

Director, Cacapon Institute

Farm Partnerships Protect the Bay

The Potomac River flows from the mountains of West Virginia to the Chesapeake Bay. More than three quarters of the bay watershed is privately owned. The Halterman farm in Baker, West Virginia is an outstanding example of the strong commitment that farmers in the Mountain State have to conservation. Owners, Arthur and Jo Ellen Halterman, operate two broiler / breeder houses and raise cattle and forage on their 330 acre farm. The farm is typical of West Virginia with steep slopes and hillside acreage.

Cattle have been fenced out of the streams and ponds on the Halterman farm to minimize bank erosion and nutrient loading. The exclusion of livestock has allowed vegetation to grow stabilizing banks, protecting water quality and enhancing riparian areas. Improved watering systems, installed through various USDA cost-share programs, provide a clean reliable source of livestock water. Grass is managed through rotational grazing.

Participation in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and cooperation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service "Partners for Wildlife" program has allowed the Haltermans to install almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of 3-strand high tensile electric fence to exclude livestock



Kevin Wickey, West Virginia NRCS State Conservationist; Greg Cook, Deputy West Virginia State Forester; Jim Bowen, West Virginia Division of Forestry Management Forester; Arthur and daughter Jane Halterman; and Donald W. Biller, Vice-Chair, Potomac Valley Conservation District review the Halterman Farm Conservation Plan, Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) and discuss the Forest Stewardship Plan. .

from an unnamed tributary of Bear's Hell Run. Over ½ mile of streambank has been protected and over 5 acres of riparian habitat have been enhanced with the planting of 850 hardwood trees. Arthur is also cooperating with the Cacapon Institute to evaluate fencing and tree planting techniques in conjunction with this project.

The Haltermans follow a certified nutrient management plan. Poultry litter is stored in a litter shed constructed through the USDA NRCS Potomac Headwaters Land Treatment Program. Dead birds are properly disposed of in a composter located on site. Mr. Halterman is diligent about taking soil and manure samples, calibrating his manure spreaders and keeping accurate records of the nutrients applied. Arthur has maintained neighbor relations by strategically placing his poultry houses, litter shed and composter to minimize the impacts of wind carried odors. The Haltermans are also aware poultry production biosecurity issues.

The Haltermans requested the assistance of the West Virginia Division of Forestry to develop a forest management plan for their 190 acres of woodland. The main objective of the plan is to improve wildlife habitat through a variety of forest management practices. Minimizing erosion on woodland roads is also a priority.

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As an educator, Arthur has passed the conservation message on to countless students in his 30 years as a middle school science teacher. With a strong background and belief in environmental education, he takes every opportunity to give his students hands-on conservation experiences. Mr. Halterman was also instrumental in forming the Baker Run Conservation Society, one of the very first watershed associations in the state. Arthur is a certified *Save Our Streams* volunteer. Save Our Streams is a volunteer monitoring program that trains persons of all ages how to monitor and care for local streams and rivers.

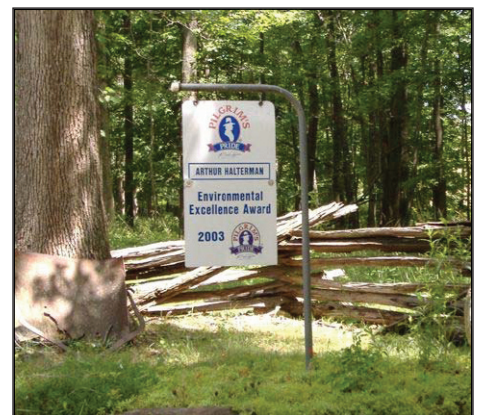


Arthur Halterman (center) tells Kevin Wickey (left) and Greg Cook that the landowner benefits from the conservation practices in their plan.

850 trees were planted to improve upland wildlife habitat. These trees, when mature, will provide shade to moderate water temperatures.



The Haltermans often invite others to their farm to showcase the best management practices that they have installed and maintained.



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